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AUTHOR Chandler, Theodore A.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

Perceived success and satisfaction with one's level of performance encourages efforts to challenge other band members for higher chairs within high school bands. Motivation of band members was tested by asking them if they had ever challenged and how frequently. Additionally, they were asked if they felt that they were correctly placed in their instrument category, what they believed their performance expectancy would be in three months, their degree of satisfaction and feeling of success with their current performance level, and to what degree they enjoyed playing their instrument. Members (N=234) of three comparable size bands representing urban, suburban, and rural areas filled out an anonymous questionnaire. The results supported the hypothesis that perceived success and satisfaction with current level of performance were related to increased numbers of challenges for higher levels and attribution for that success to internal factors. Failure and lack of satisfaction with one's current level of performance resulted in fewer challenges and external attributions. (CFR)

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Theodore A. Chandler
David Chiarella
Carl Auria

College of Education
Kent State University
Kent, Ohio, 44242

SO017150

Abstract

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Theodore A. Chandler
David Chiarella
Carl Auria

Motivation of band members was "tested" by asking them if they have ever challenged and how frequently, if they feel they are correctly placed, performance expectancy level three months from now, degree of satisfaction and feeling of success with current level of performance and degree they enjoy playing their instrument. Degree of satisfaction with one's instrument and to what factors one attributes one's current level of performance were also assessed. Three comparable size bands (total N = 234) representing urban, suburban, and rural areas completed a questionnaire anonymously. Results supported hypothesis that if one perceives success and satisfaction with one's current level of performance one will challenge more and probably attribute that success to internal factors, such as effort, natural musical ability and/or technical knowledge of the instruments. Failure and lack of satisfaction with one's current level of performance resulted in fewer challenges and external attributions.

Performance Expectancy, Success, Satisfaction and Attributions as Variables in Band Challenges

Motivation continues to be a major concern of music teachers as evidenced by no less than four articles appearing in the Music Educators Journal during 1984 and 1985. "Yet the role of motivation in musical achievement is little understood and has received scant attention by music education researchers." (Asmus, 1985, p. 1.) However, it's been estimated by at least three researchers (Krueger, 1984; Walker, 1979; Caimi, 1981) that the variance in musical achievement can be accounted for in part by motivation. The variance ranges from 12 to 27 percent.

An examination of the recent research literature reveals that the majority of the studies emphasize behavioral (specifically operant conditioning) approaches (e.g. Kennedy, 1984; Wolfe, 1984; Madsen & Duke, 1985; Spradling, 1985). The behavior modification strategies in these studies ranged wide: token economy, behavioral contracts, teacher approval, reinforcement, time-out. What all of these share in common is the belief that the responsibility for motivating students lies with the teacher. This is echoed by such comments as: ". . .keeping interest high. . ." (Kennedy, 1984, p. 48); ". . .how can we motivate them. . ." (Powell, 1984, p. 331); ". . .the teacher must assume responsibility. . ." (Wolfe, 1984, p. 34).

The attribution motivational model (Bar Tal, 1978; Weiner, 1979) is a cognitive theory that contrasts with the behavioral model. Attribution theory examines the person's perceived causes of one's success or failure. If one assumes that one's success or failure is due to internal factors, under one's control and capable of being altered, then one will engage in that behavior. For example, effort fits this pattern. Effort is internal, controllable and changeable. On the other hand, if one attributes success to luck, this is external, uncontrollable, and usually unchangeable. If one is to gain mastery over the environment the responsibility and ownership should come from within and be within one's own control. Ascribing one's failure or success to outside uncontrollable forces only reinforces a sense of helplessness and powerlessness. Such a causal attribution has subsequent consequences for emotional reactions and for future expectancies. Together, these determine performance orientation and behavior in a new situation (Weiner, 1980; Chandler, Spies & Wolf, 1982).

Although attribution theory has been employed to explain the dynamics of success and failure in many academic achievement areas, only one researcher (Asmus, 1981; 1985) could be located who has applied this to music education. Since musical skills are usually considered to be indigenous to the individual, it is not unexpected that ". . .when students cite reasons for success and failure in music, they

tend to utilize internal attributions." (Asmus, 1985, p. 7) Since both ability and effort are internal attributions, it is encouraging that Asmus (1985) found that his sample of music students attributed success/failure more to effort than ability, which is frequently viewed as uncontrollable and unchangeable.

The achievement motivation model of Atkinson and Raynor (1974) suggested that success is a function of a number of variables, such as performance outcome, perceived success, satisfaction, expectancy and value. Since motivation is an inferred construct it has been difficult obtaining measures of motivation. High school band members typically use the chair challenges and this could be used as an operational definition of motivation. In such a way one could "test" the motivation of band members by asking them if they have ever challenged and how frequently. It is through the challenge incentive or threat that some band members may progress or not. Others, less externally inhibited, may increase their competence through effort and the satisfaction from reaching a certain level of competence. It is important for band directors to know this distinction among his/her students in order to know where to place the onus of effort.

It is hypothesized that if one perceives success and satisfaction with one's current level of performance one will challenge more and attribute that success to internal factors, such as effort, natural musical ability and/or

technical knowledge of the instruments. Failure and lack of satisfaction with one's current level of performance resulted in fewer challenges and external attributions.

It is also hypothesized that perceived value or importance of one's instrument should also be another moderating variable in one's perceived success/failure. It has been suggested that valid causal attributions for task outcomes were not likely to be reported by students if the tasks which led to their success and failure were not meaningful to the participants (Lefcourt, Hogg, Struthers, & Holmes, 1975). Since perceived importance may be a function of the particular musical selection, one may not be able to get at this directly. Importance or value can be inferred if one would choose the instrument again if given the choice, if the reason(s) for choosing the instrument implied intrinsic value and if one perceives the instrument as a difficult one.

RESULTS

More than half (55.1%) of the sample responded that they have challenged for a higher chair and older students challenged less often than younger ones. Further, those who are currently playing their initial instrument choice are more likely to challenge for a higher chair (r=.16, p 2.05), to perceive natural musical ability as more of an influence on performance (r=.14, $p<.05$) and to perceive luck as less of an influence on performance (r=.50, $p<.05$). Students who did not challenge began with an instrument other than the one

they are currently playing (r=.16, $p<.05$) and responded that someone else chose their current instrument (r=.14, $p<.05$). Moreover, if they had to do it over again they would choose another instrument (r=.18, $p<.01$).

Those students who would choose the same instrument again practice more (r=.13, $p<.05$), expect to play the instrument longer (r.28, $P<.001$), and have challenged for a higher chair (r=.18, $p<.01$). In addition, these students perceived themselves as more satisfied with their current level of performance (r.124, $p<.001$), felt more successful (r=.26, $p<.001$), enjoyed playing the instrument more (r=.48, $p<.001$), felt technical knowledge was an important influence on performance (r=.20, $p<.01$), and perceived effort (r=.30, $p<.001$), natural musical ability (r=.18, $p<.01$), and help from the director as important factors influencing their current instrument.

A positive correlation was observed between the amount of hours spent per day practicing and the number of times the students challenged for a higher chair (r=.18, $p<.05$). Significant positive correlations were also observed for the number of hours practiced per day, the students' perceived success (r=.19, $p<.01$) and how much they enjoyed playing the instrument (r=.25, $p<.001$). The more hours practiced the more technical knowledge (r=.16, $p<.05$), effort (r=.31, $p<.001$), natural musical ability (r.14, p.05), and help from the director (r=.18, $p<.01$) were perceived as

important factors influencing their current performance. Finally, those students who practiced more expected to play their instrument longer (r=.23, p<001).

The longer the students expect to play their instrument the more likely they feel they should be placed higher (r=.20, p<.01) and speculate that they will be placed in a higher chair (r=.16, p<.05). Feeling satisfied, successful, and enjoyment gained playing the instrument were positively related to the number of years the students expect to play the same instrument (r=15, p<.05); (r=.30, p<.001); and (r=.46, p<.001), respectively. The longer students expect to play their instrument the more technical knowledge (r=.27, p<.001), effort (r=.30, p<.001), natural musical ability (r=.24, p<.001), and difficulty level of the instrument (r=.16, p<.05), and help from persons other than director (r=.14, p<.05) were thought to influence current performance.

The students' personal reactions regarding their performance expectancy as well as their perceived success, satisfaction, and enjoyment were regressed on the attributional items. The results revealed that perceived success and enjoyment were consistent predictors of the students' attributions.

Insert Table 1 Here

Table 1 indicates that enjoyment gained from playing the instrument predicted amount of effort, difficulty level of the instrument, and degree of help from persons other than the director vs. factors influencing their current performance for those students who challenge. The perception that performance will diminish in the future combined with enjoyment to predict help from the director as a factor influencing performance. For students who challenged, perceived success was positively related to internal attributes such as, technical knowledge of the instrument and natural musical ability. Feeling successful was not related or predictive of the external attributes for the students who challenged.

Similarly, when the personal reaction items were regressed on the attributional items for those students who felt they should be placed above their current position, perceived success and enjoyment were significant predictors of the internal attributions. (Table 2). In this group, enjoyment predicted approximately 50 percent of the variance in the amount of effort perceived as influencing performance. In contrast, the only external attributional item predicted was help from others than the director.

As correlation coefficients in Table 3 indicate, perceived enjoyment and success predicted both internal and external attributions for those students who did not challenge for a higher chair. Both variables entered into a

regression equation that predicted more than one-quarter of the variance in effort and more than one-third of the variance in natural musical ability. Perceived enjoyment was positively related to help from others and inversely related to luck as factors influencing performance. The more students enjoy playing their instruments the less luck is perceived as affecting their performance, even for the group who did not challenge.

For those students who felt that their placement should remain the same, neither above or below, perceived success, enjoyment and satisfaction with their instruments accounted for more than two-thirds of the variance in attributing performance levels to natural musical ability.

Insert Table 4 Here

Feeling successful and enjoyment combined to predict one-fourth of the variance in the role effort plays in maintaining current performance. The perception that performance will diminish in the future was inversely related to help from the director, indicating that the more one expects failure the more help from director was attributed as influencing and maintaining performance. Perceived enjoyment, predicted help from others, but like the group who did not challenge enjoyment was inversely related to amount of luck for those who felt they should remain in their current positions.

DISCUSSION

Self worth theory (Covington & Beery, 1976) would predict that older students would challenge less often than younger students, (as the data indicate), primarily to preserve one's ego. The older student probably equates self worth with performance, and having been unsuccessful more frequently than the younger students, would not want to place themselves in jeopardy.

Not challenging for a higher chair apparently is a signal that those students are probably not as happy with the choice of their instrument, are not playing as well as they think they could and do not enjoy playing as well as the challengers. Here we see a clear reciprocal relationship between attitude and performance. No doubt each is a cause and effect. If one takes a strictly behavioral approach, one would emphasize improving the student's level of performance mastery on the assumption that this would contribute to improved satisfaction and self-confidence.

Attribution theory (Weiner, 1979) predicts that those who perceive success tend to attribute that success internally and to controllable factors. In contrast, those who perceive failure will tend to attribute that to external variables which are uncontrollables. That explains in part why those who expect future diminished performance rate more help from the director (external and uncontrollable) as influencing their current level of performance. By the same token,

musical ability (internal) is the attributional explanation in large part for feeling successful and enjoyment.

Practice probably also operates as both cause and effect. If one is satisfied with one's instrument and expects to continue to play it one is more likely to practice. Here is where effort attribution contributes to increased practice. As a result of more practice, the more competent and confident one becomes, the more it leads to successful challenges and more enjoyment. Obviously if a student enjoys playing the instrument s/he is more likely to expend further effort.

As the data indicate, help from the band director may not be predictive of what is positive since attributionally this is perceived as external and uncontrollable, which leads to a sense of helplessness. The implication of this is that the band director needs to develop the skill of offering help in a way that protects the ego, gives the student the option of refusing and challenges the student to use effort and ability. Perhaps the role of catalyst is the better model.

In any case, another implication of this is that the director's task is to identify early those students who may be "at risk." For example, those students who infrequently challenge, who didn't select their own instrument or who are dissatisfied with it--also those who have low future expectancies of success--these are the potential drop-outs.

Perhaps helping these students set realistic expectations and then providing opportunities to meet those successive approximations to specific goals may be an important task for the director. This means that there may be three significant tasks that these high risk need to accomplish in order to begin to feel successful and enjoy playing. These are: (a) acquiring technical knowledge; (b) developing specific technique skills; (c) obtaining practice with reinforced feedback.

Another implication of this study relates to the reciprocity between variables. For example, feeling successful predicted technical knowledge. But then if one develops sufficient technical knowledge it leads to more competence and success. Finally, success leads to enjoyment. This suggests that we cannot afford to wait until students enjoy a task in order to expect good performance. Frequently, enjoyment follows from competence. Hence, suggesting that students are not performing well because they are unmotivated could be a "cop-out." As all of us realize, early learning is not very pleasing. Only as we reach a certain level of mastery can we begin to enjoy it. That suggests that skill development, in the absence of positive affect, must emerge first. Perhaps we need to help students understand that they don't need to enjoy something in order to achieve. By making that a pre-condition, we may be preventing a student from achieving.

Finally, we need to appreciate that effort attributions should be emphasized because effort is internal, controllable and alterable. In contrast, natural musical ability, although internal, is uncontrollable and unalterable. Ironically, the more natural music ability one has, the less one may apply oneself. Here is where effort can really pay off. And for the student with lower natural musical ability, the major hope to achieve success will only come through effort that attempts to alter teachable skills.

Table 1. Prediction of internal and external attributions from students' personal reactions for those who challenged

Variable	r	R	R^2	F
	INTERNAL ATTRIBUTIONS			
Technical Knowledge				
Success	.30	.30	.09	12.20**
Effort				
Enjoyment	.50	.50	.25	42.75***
Natural Musical Ability	.39	.39	.15	22.66***
	EXTERNAL ATTRIBUTIONS			
Difficulty Level				
Enjoyment	.18	.18	.04	4.47*
Help From Director				
Enjoyment	.26	.26	.07	9.56**
Performance Expectancy	-.25	.37	.14	10.03**
Help From Others				
Enjoyment	.35	.35	.12	17.90***

*p<.05
**p<.001
***p<.001
an=128

Table 2. Prediction of internal and external attributions from students' personal reactions for those who feel they should be placed above their current position.a

Variable	r	R	R^2	F
		INTERNAL ATTRIBUTIONS		
Technical Knowledge				
Success	.41	.41	.17	14.05***
Effort				
Enjoyment	.64	.64	.41	48.15***
Natural Musical Ability				
Success	.41	.41	.17	14.20***
		EXTERNAL ATTRIBUTIONS		
Help From Others				
Enjoyment	.33	.33	.10	8.73**

**p<.01
***p<.001
an=72

Table 3. Prediction of internal and external attributions from students' personal reactions for those who did not challenge.a

Variable	r	R	R^2	F
		INTERNAL ATTRIBUTIONS		
Technical Knowledge				
Success	.41	.41	.17	20.66***
Effort				
Success	.45	.45	.21	25.90***
Enjoyment	.41	.52	.27	8.51**
Natural Musical Ability				
Success	.56	.56	.32	47.30***
Enjoyment	.45	.62	.38	9.84**
		EXTERNAL ATTRIBUTIONS		
Difficulty Level				
Success	.22	.22	.05	4.93*
Help From Others				
Enjoyment	.27	.27	.07	7.56**
Luck				
Enjoyment	-.23	.23	.05	5.72*

*p<.05
**p<.01
***p<.001
an=102

Table 4. Prediction of internal and external attributions from students' personal reactions for those who felt they should remain in the same position.a

Variable	r	R	R^2	F
	INTERNAL ATTRIBUTIONS			
Technical Knowledge				
Success	.32	.32	.10	15.57***
Effort				
Enjoyment	.49	.49	.24	44.05***
Success	.32	.51	.26	4.33*
Natural Musical Ability				
Success	.54	.54	.29	57.12***
Satisfaction	.53	.58	.34	10.55***
Enjoyment	.38	.61	.37	7.18**
	EXTERNAL ATTRIBUTIONS			
Difficulty Level				
Performance Expectancy	.19	.19	.04	4.9*
Help From Director				
Performance Expectancy	-.22	.22	.05	7.38**
Enjoyment	.21	.31	.10	7.30**
Help From Others				
Enjoyment	.31	.31	.10	14.63***
Luck				
Enjoyment	-.18	.18	.03	4.60*

*p<.05
**p<.01
***p<.001
an=142

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